



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202- _____

August 2000

Dear Colleague:

We are pleased to share with you the proceedings of the leadership summit sponsored by the Department of Education and Howard University that was convened last summer. The summit was attended by presidents and academic leaders from several of the nation's leading doctoral granting universities and from many higher education associations. This conference, *Leadership Summit on Diversity in Doctoral Education*, followed an exploratory meeting of deans and administrators from research universities convened by the Department of Education the preceding fall. Presentations from both conferences demonstrated the need for the nation's research universities to intensify their efforts to make increased diversity in doctoral degree production a reality.

While the summit successfully fostered the dialogue on this issue, we must continue our conversation if we are to realize measurable progress in what is generally considered a national imperative. Currently, graduate enrollment, especially at the doctoral level, does not reflect the face of American society. We have found widespread consensus that encouraging talented students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds to pursue doctoral degrees is in the best interests of higher education, the workforce, and the nation. This is an interest that we are committed to pursuing vigorously.

We need to assure that our graduate degree programs mirror the face of society, as do our four-year and two-year colleges. It is our hope that the leadership summit will serve as a catalyst for all of us to further our understanding and strengthen our resolve to address the continuing issues of access and excellence for all Americans.

We urge you to recommit your university to continue enhancing doctoral education opportunities for academically qualified students from all groups that are now underrepresented. We trust that these proceedings will be of assistance as you and your colleagues seek to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

Richard Riley
Secretary,
U.S. Department of Education

H. Patrick Swygert
President,
Howard University